

Interventions for Opioid Use Disorder among Adolescents: A Systematic Review

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Abstract:

Background: This systematic review evaluates adolescent Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) interventions. The high rate of overdose deaths and the large number of adolescents affected highlight the opioid misuse crisis.

Methods: The review examined pharmacologic and nonpharmacologic opioid misuse interventions for 13–26-year-olds. It focused on interventions aimed at reducing substance use or treating psychiatric conditions with OUD from 2014 to 2024. The review included studies on Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-approved OUD medications and behavioral interventions such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and Motivational Interviewing.

Results: The review included Eleven studies. Pharmacotherapy and CBT were found to reduce relapse rates in programs like Youth Opioid Recovery Support (YORS). Behavioural Interventions and long-term pharmacological treatments, particularly Buprenorphine, were effective in improving treatment retention and reducing substance use.

Conclusions: The review emphasizes the importance of early, age-specific interventions and the integration of substance use treatment into healthcare systems.

Keywords:

Interventions, Adolescents, Opioid Use Disorder, Heroin.